

Fall 2009



- The Wonder of Emotions
- Be There
- The Shelter of Each Other
- Support Groups
- Resources for Challenging Times
- Community Forum & March Retreat



CHAMPS

Center for Healthy Aging, Ministries, Programs & Services

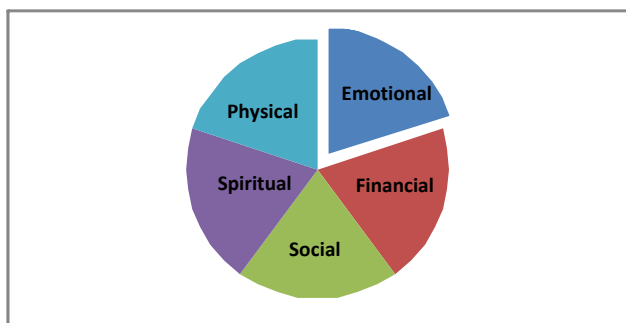
Teach us to number our days that we may present to Thee a heart of wisdom. *-Psalm 90:12*

THE JOURNEY

CHAMPS HEALTH FOCUS

The Center for Healthy Aging, Ministries, Programs and Services (CHAMPS) began in January of 2006, to support congregations in their member care efforts for older adults. Focused on healthy aging we offer materials, consultation, education and support to enhance the efforts that congregations have chosen in their service to older adults.

CHAMPS is currently supported in our mission through funding from Immanuel Senior Living. After our initial three years under a grant from the Alegent Health Community Benefit Trust, CHAMPS has continued into the fourth year of supporting congregational health. CHAMPS has been working at various levels with almost 80 churches, which represents thousands of members of congregations with varying needs and challenges for healthy aging.



The Wonder of Emotions

Books tell us a lot about the problems of emotions, when they are out of balance and the difficulties of mental health issues. I don't know of many books that tell us how to know that things are going well, when our emotions are healthy. So maybe the response of healthy emotions is that they positively impact the person; that they enhance not detract from our daily lives is one way we know our emotions are working for us. Our emotions work to help meet the needs in our lives and to understand others have their own emotional needs.

People respond differently to events and situations in their lives. Things happen that are difficult for some to work through. Scripture tells us Jesus cried at the death of Lazarus, that he ran to where he was. Even for Him it was a separation, a point of loss. We all have losses in our lives. We have lost people dear to us, lost a spouse to dementia, lost our mobility, and maybe our sense of hope.

But what is the value of our emotions and how do we know if there is a balance to our emotions? Some emotions like fear and anger are protective and defensive. They allow us to react to situations where we feel there is physical danger and if we keep them under control, allow us to respond to situations when we perceive emotional or psychological threats. Other emotions of joy and love might just be

(continued on page 2)

Low-Impact Exercise Programs

St. Paul Lutheran, 13271 Millard Ave
Mondays & Fridays, 8:15-8:45 AM

St. Columbkille Catholic, 200 East Sixth,
Papillion
Mondays, 9:15 AM

First United Methodist, 7020 Cass St
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:00-10:00 AM

Greater St. Paul's COGIC, 2123 Miami St
call 341-2231 for start date & information

St. Patrick's Catholic, 508 Angus St, Gretna
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 8:00 AM

Grace United Methodist, 2418 E St
Thursdays, 2:30 PM

Resurrection Lutheran, 153 S McKenna Ave,
Gretna
Fridays, 9:30 AM

Christ Community, 404 S 108th Ave
Wednesdays, 10:00 AM

King of Kings Lutheran, 11615 "I" St
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 10:00 AM

Messiah Lutheran Church, 5015 S 80th St
Mondays, 1:30 PM

Matter of Balance/Tai Chi

Mary Our Queen Catholic, 3405 S 118 St
Mondays & Wednesdays, 4:15-5:00 PM
(begins March 9th)

St. Columbkille Catholic, 200 E Sixth St,
Papillion
Wednesdays & Saturdays, 9:30-10:15 AM

Broadway Methodist, 11 S 1st St,
Council Bluffs, IA
Wednesdays, 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Tri-Parishes of Council Bluffs
(Holy Family, Our Lady of Carter Lake &
Queen of Apostles)
Call 712-323-2916 for information

*For additional programs, please call the
CHAMPS office at 895-2224.*



there to connect us to others and keep us healthy, physically and mentally.

Over time we can get stuck with responses that really don't serve us well but are just what we do because it's our habit. Someone once said that problem behaviors are bad habits with long histories. But we can change things with some work. Sometimes we have to challenge our thinking, enlist support in our efforts to make change and get medical assistance for the physical toll depression can have.

We at CHAMPS are not experts in the emotional areas of life and there is much that can be said about mental health, depression and isolation in life. At some point everyone is challenged. Our hope is to intervene by helping congregations understand that mental health issues at all levels effect everyone and having ways to respond with support and referrals is important for members of congregations.

One of the main concerns we have for congregations and seniors comes from what seniors tell us is the number one fear they have about getting older; being alone. For people created to be in community, the faith community, people who are created to be connected to others, being alone can be devastating. It can cause fear from a sense of being at risk, of not being cared for and may become a starting point at which they lose hope.

Be There

If being alone is the number one concern of aging adults, what can the church community do to help? Congregations are a tremendous resource for member care. Their members have the experience of life and loss, of faith and hope. Not everyone is good at caring for others and the ones I appreciate are the ones who tell us that. But others understand that one of our greatest gifts is to be present when others are in need. You don't need to have the right answers; you don't have to ask probing questions, you simply have to be a participant in a ministry of presence. Be there.

There was a psychiatrist named Carl Menninger, who was challenged by some of his students as to what he would tell someone who was having a "nervous breakdown". He told his students he would tell the person to get up, straighten up their house then go across town and help someone who needed help. What I think he was saying was that other people often have it as bad if not worse and that giving of ourselves can help us keep our perspective. I heard it put more simply in a statement; that depression is too much thinking and not enough action. In either case, we can be the hope others need.

A joyful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.

- Proverbs 17:22

Some of the programs that keep our emotions on track that churches can offer to assist members are Care Callers, a telephone ministry; Stephen or BeFriender Ministries with people trained for supporting others; Chore Companions to do minor home repairs, Parish Nurses to consult, Hospital Visitors to maintain contact, Communion Providers when coming to church is not possible, Grief Share for those suffering a loss, and Alzheimer's Support Groups for those in the midst of a loss to dementia. When congregations don't have the resources for certain things then they need to be aware of the resources in other churches and the community. Many of these are listed on the CHAMPS website.

SUPPORT GROUPS

GRIEF SUPPORT

St. Paul's Lutheran, 13271 Millard Ave
Tuesdays, 1/5/10-3/30/10, 7:00 PM

Immanuel Lutheran Church, 104 Galvin Rd N
Bellevue - Tuesdays, 6:00 PM

Christ Community, 404 S 108th Av
Wednesdays, 6:30 PM

Divine Shepherd Lutheran, 15005 Q St
Tuesdays - beginning in January 2010

St. Andrew's United Methodist,
15050 W Maple Rd - Mondays, 7:00 PM

Thanksgiving Lutheran, 3702 370 Plaza,
Bellevue - Thursdays, 6:30 PM

Trinity Interdenominational,
15555 West Dodge - Sundays, 9:30 AM

Messiah Lutheran, 5015 South 80th St
Thursdays, 5:30 PM

King of Kings Lutheran, 11615 'I' St
Sundays, 1:00 PM

Celebration Covenant, 16868 Giles Rd
Wednesdays, 7:00 PM

CAREGIVER SUPPORT

King of King's Lutheran, 11615 'I' St
1st & 3rd Sundays, 12:30 PM

ALZHEIMER'S

Walnut Grove Independent Living
4901 S 153rd St
Third Tuesday of month, 7:00 PM

CELEBRATE RECOVERY, INC.

Faith Westwood Methodist, 4814 Oaks Lane
Wednesdays, 6:45 PM

Christ Community, 404 S 108th Av
Thursdays, 7PM

King of Kings Lutheran, 11615 "I" St
Mondays, 7 PM

Westside, 15050 W Dodge Rd
Mondays, 7 PM

HOPE FOR THE JOURNEY

(For Women Coping with
Cancer or Chronic Illness)

Faith Westwood Methodist, 4814 Oaks Lane
2nd & 4th Tuesday, 7:00 PM

Emotions are an amazing component of our lives. All of the areas on the wellness wheel connect to help with our overall health because they all interact with each other. One of the great ways to help keep our emotions healthy is to stay engaged physically, maintaining an exercise routine. Some studies show that exercise done regularly is equivalent in its effect to some brands of antidepressants and over time is actually better. (That doesn't mean that you should avoid talking to your doctor about feeling down and getting their help.) Good nutrition, enough sleep, staying connected to others; all help us stay well.

The Shelter of Each Other

In September of 1979, a woman wrote a letter to her friend and she said, "Jesus has a very special love for you. As for me, the silence and the emptiness is so great that I look and do not see, listen, and do not hear." These were the words of Mother Theresa; even she had a season of searching and doubt. But I suspect from the example of her life that the next day she got up, went out and helped other people. She put her faith into action regardless of how she felt. I don't know about you, but if Mother Theresa can have a difficult season, if Jesus can cry at the loss of his friend, then I suspect we are also going to have a bad day or two in our lives.

There is an old Irish saying that probably gets to the heart of the matter and it says, "We live in each other's shelter". CHAMPS believes that the faith community is the shelter for so many.

Remember the wellness wheel is a reminder that there is a balance in our lives that keeps us from having such a bumpy ride. Taking care of your emotional health is a little easier when you use the other areas to your advantage. Exercise, stay connected to friends, face the reality of your finances and make a plan, and set aside time for God - time when you can truly be present.

I said in a recent sermon that I feel the challenge is not for God to be there for us, but for us to be present with Him. Scripture tells us:

Even to your old age and gray hairs
I am he, I am he who will sustain you.
I have made you and I will carry you;
I will sustain you and I will rescue you.

- Isaiah 46: 4

Rabbi Harold Kushner, says in Hebrew the phrase "I am he", means "I am with you". He is with us in our old age, to sustain us, carry us and rescue us. Be present with Him. We invite you to join us on this *Journey* as we support congregations to help their church be "a great place to grow old".

-Tom Adams, Director of CHAMPS

"May the peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your heart and minds through Christ Jesus." - Philippians 4:7

If you would like a copy of this newsletter sent to a friend, please email CHAMPS at champs@crossandheart.org or call (402) 895-2224.



NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
OMAHA, NE
PERMIT NO. 4

CHAMPS
13271 Millard Ave
Omaha, NE 68137
(402) 895-2224

Email: champs@crossandheart.org
Website: www.champsonline.info

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

CHAMPS is housed at St. Paul's Lutheran Church

A booklet of basic community resources entitled “Resources for Challenging Times” is available at the CHAMPS website at www.champsonline.info.

SAVE THE DATE



Tuesday, November 17, 6:30 PM

CHAMPS Community Forum at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 13271 Millard Avenue
Dee Aguilar from the UNL Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, presenting “Laugh Out Loud: Balancing Mind, Body and Spirit.” RSVP to (402) 895-2224.



March 2010

A retreat with CHAMPS on “Supporting Older Adults in the Faith Community” at Camp Carol Joy Holling Retreat Center, Ashland, NE

Support for CHAMPS is provided by Immanuel Senior Living

